



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 18 December 2019, 10:30

**Chairman: Mr R Phillips**  
**Vice-Chairman: Mr P Tuthill**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Ms K S Guthrie, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Dr K Pollock, Mrs J Potter, Professor J W Raine, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs D Toynbee, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall

**Also in attendance: Mr John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

### **234 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mr R Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos and Mr R Morris.

### **235 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was a member of the Fire NJC, Fire Pension Scheme Advisory Board and Chairman of the LGPS Scheme Board.

### **236 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman thanked the fire crews for all their assistance during the floods in October/November this year.

He also informed the Authority of the following:

- Nigel Snape, Head of Legal Services had been appointed as legal advisor to the LGA/National Employers Advisory Board.
- An update on the Shropshire Alliance would be provided at the February Authority meeting.
- He had met with Group Leaders, Officers, Regional and National

Fire Bodies since the last Authority meeting.

Members were also reminded that a tour of the Wyre Forest Hub would take place immediately following the close of the meeting.

**237 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**238 Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 15 October 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**239 Budget Monitoring 2019/20 – Quarter 2**

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2019/20.

The Treasurer made Members aware of the following variations:

- 1) £0.500m underspending on capital financing charges due to continued delays to the major building programme.
- 2) £0.285m provision for the back-dating of the still unresolved July 2017 Grey book pay award.
- 3) £0.130m relating to back-dated injury pensions.

The Treasurer also informed Members that the provisional settlement had still not been received and was now unlikely before Christmas.

A Member requested an analysis of drawing on reserves to be provided to the Authority. The Treasurer confirmed that it was already in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

An update on the building schemes was requested by a Member and the Head of Legal Services assured the Authority that a property update would be provided at the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED that the Authority note:**

- (i) the position in relation to back-dated injury pensions; and**
- (ii) the potential transfer to the pay award reserve and the continuing**

**budget risk regarding the pay award.**

**240 Updated Code of Conduct**

The Head of Legal Services presented a report updating Members on the best practice recommendations from the recent report published by the National Committee on Standards in Public life and put forward a revised draft Code of Conduct for approval, which had been prepared in conjunction with Monitoring Officers across Worcestershire.

A Member queried why the gifts and hospitality register value had increased from £5.00 to £15.00. The Head of Legal Services explained that £5 was previously too low and it had been agreed by Monitoring Officers that £15.00 was a more suitable value threshold for such registration to meet the purpose of transparency.

A Member queried the current meeting venues and why meetings were not balanced between Hereford and Worcester. The Chairman assured Members that there was a long standing agreement that one Authority meeting a year would be held in Hereford.

**RESOLVED that the Authority approves the draft code of conduct which has been revised to take into account areas of best practice identified by the National Committee on Standards in Public Life.**

**241 HMICFRS Improvement Plan – Update Quarter 2, 2019-20**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress in implementing the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

Members' attention was drawn to the key points during Quarter 2:

- Effectiveness - evaluation of Safe and Well Checks and the Dying to Drive programme together with online training for safeguarding and additional domestic abuse training.
- Efficiency - the Service Delivery structure regarding crewing has been approved, additional staff in the Community risk department have been appointed to work in the areas of prevention and protection.
- People - Senior Management Board visits and CRMP workshops will continue throughout the Service, with key themes and emerging issues being reviewed. Further promotion processes have continued and on-call charter work is continuing to support the recruitment and retention of on-call operational staff.

There was discussion regarding Grenfell and the Chief Fire Officer

assured Members that the Service had regular engagement with the high rise buildings in Worcestershire to ensure effective processes were in place.

**RESOLVED that the Authority note progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.**

**242 2019-20 Performance Report: Quarters 1-2**

At the start of this item, the Chief Fire Officer presented Members with information on the Service's current attendance standard and explained how it is calculated.

Members agreed that the way attendance times are measured needed to be reviewed so that they could be more easily compared with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority and that they needed to be understandable, comprehensible and a realistic target.

*[Cllr Oborski left the meeting at 11.55am].*

The Chief Fire Officer then presented a summary of the Service's Quarters 1 and 2 performance against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board.

A Member requested more detailed information for cross boundary incidents to be included in the performance statistics.

*[Mr Campion left the meeting at 12.10pm and returned at 12.12pm]*

*[Cllr Hey left the meeting at 12.11pm and returned at 12.12pm]*

**RESOLVED that:**

**1. A review of Attendance Standards be undertaken.**

**2. Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarters 1-2, 2019-20:**

**i) A total of 3,936 incidents were attended in Q1-Q2, a decrease of 3.29% (134 incidents) over the same Quarter of 2018-19, and 5.92% (220 incidents) lower than the average for the last five years. The overall five year trend shows a gradual increase in the total number of incidents.**

**ii) The majority of the decrease in Q1-Q2 is accounted for by a drop in the numbers of Fire incidents, particularly Primary and Secondary Fire incidents, while the number of Special Service**

incidents was up:

a. **Fires:** an overall decrease of 24.87% was mainly accounted for by 32.64% decrease in the number of Secondary Fires (220 incidents) and an 18.00% decrease in Primary Fires (115 incidents).

b. **Special Services:** an increase of 22.28% (211 incidents) was mainly accounted for by a 195.65% increase in the number of Assisting other agencies (135 incidents) and a 28.37% increase in Other Special Services (101 incidents).

c. **False Alarms:** a decrease of 0.78% (14 incidents), the most frequent automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, houses of single occupancy, up to 3 storeys and hospitals.

iii) Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1-Q2 2019-20 was 4.06 days lost per head with the biggest proportion 2.74 days lost per head for Long Term Sickness.

iv) The Service attended 45.34% (141 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarters 1-2, compared with 57.30% (208 incidents) in the same period in 2018-19. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all Primary Building Fires was 11 minutes for Quarters 1-2 compared with 10 minutes 17 seconds in the same period in 2018-19.

v) The average for the overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance was 83.92%; however, this has decreased by an average of 3.52% when compared to the same period in 2018-19.

## **243 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed Members of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since May 2019.

A Member was concerned about the summer leave restriction for firefighters for next year but was reassured by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer that this had now been rectified.

**RESOLVED** that the following items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:

1. **7 Day 42 Hours Flexi System**

2. **DCP**
3. **Top 12 Policies/SPIs**
4. **Equality Impact Assessment – request for SPI**
5. **Joint Protocol for TU Duties**
6. **Tax Implications for Officers private use of Service Vehicles**
7. **Fitness Policy**
8. **People Strategy 2020-2022**
9. **Equality & Diversity Strategy**
10. **Positive Action Strategy**

**244 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee**

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 15 October 2019.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 15 October 2019 be received and noted.**

The Meeting ended at: 12:21

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman